United Nations S/PV.4577 (Resumption 1)

# Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

*Provisional*

## 4577th meeting

Thursday, 18 July 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Baroness Valerie Amos | (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) |
| *Members:* | Bulgaria | Mr. Tafrov |
| | Cameroon | Mr. Chungong |
| | China | Mr. Wang Yingfan |
| | Colombia | Mr. Franco |
| | France | Mr. Levitte |
| | Guinea | Mr. Fall |
| | Ireland | Mr. Ryan |
| | Mauritius | Mr. Koonjul |
| | Mexico | Mrs. Arce de Jeannet |
| | Norway | Mr. Kolby |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Gatilov |
| | Singapore | Mr. Mahbubani |
| | Syrian Arab Republic | Mr. Wehbe |
| | United States of America | Mr. Rosenblatt |

## Agenda

The situation in Africa

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-48524 (E)

*The meeting resumed at 3 p.m.*

**The President**: We now begin the second session of the workshop, which is on developing a coordinated action plan for the Mano River Union.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Sir Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided. I invite Sir Kieran to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye, Director for West Africa of the United Nations Development Programme.

It is so decided. I invite Mr. Dieye to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 15 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that the Security Council extend an invitation to General Chekh Omar Diarra, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States, to address the Security Council under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, during its consideration of the Mano River Union on 18 July 2002".

This letter will be published as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2002/760.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees on an invitation under rule 39 to General Chekh Omar Diarra.

There being no objection, it is so decided. I invite General Diarra to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Florian Fichtl, Senior Social Protection Specialist for Regional Human Development of the World Bank.

It is so decided. I invite Mr. Fichtl to take a seat at the Council table. We will now start our second session. We have three keynote speakers, and I should like to give the floor to Sir Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

**Mr. Prendergast**: Madam President, I understand that you spent the morning session discussing lessons learned in Sierra Leone, so I propose to restrict myself to a brief look at the situation in Liberia and at political efforts to stabilize the subregion.

I will start with the current situation in Liberia, which has come full circle for the United Nations — from civil war to a peace agreement, followed by democratic elections accompanied by a United Nations peacekeeping operation, and now, since July last year, a drift back into civil strife as a result of the armed confrontation between Government forces and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD).

Clearly, the international community and the Government of Liberia in particular need to learn lessons from the way in which the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building was managed in that country.

As the Council knows, the ongoing fighting has caused thousands of civilians to flee to camps for refugees and internally displaced persons. There are approximately 130,000 internally displaced Liberians today. Since the beginning of the year, 40,000 Liberian refugees have crossed the border into Sierra Leone. During the past few weeks, LURD forces have come perilously close to Monrovia. Government forces recently embarked on a new military offensive against the LURD positions at Tubmanburg in Lower Lofa. The Government are also trying to recapture other cities.

As military offensives and counter-offensives are carried out, both sides have looted and pillaged, including in residential areas and against civilians. As a precautionary measure, United Nations international civilian staff have relocated their residential and most working premises to safer locations.

I now turn briefly to the question of reconciliation in Liberia, including the role played by

the Rabat process, the Mano River Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). I would like to say that, unless urgently and decisively addressed, instability in Liberia risks reversing the significant gains made in the peace process in Sierra Leone. That instability could have a further domino effect in the region, negatively affecting the situations in other neighbouring countries, in particular Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

The view of the United Nations is that the current containment policy towards Liberia has its limitations. It needs to be complemented with a coherent and a constructive political agenda. In our view, the international community needs to encourage and support the efforts by ECOWAS and by Liberian political and civil society organizations to exert pressure on President Taylor to create a conducive environment for carrying out security sector reforms and for promoting good governance, dialogue and national reconciliation.

We hope that President Kabbah can be encouraged to persevere in his efforts to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the Liberian crisis now that LURD seems to be ready for dialogue. We also hope that Guinea, as a member of the Security Council and as a neighbour, will be able to play a role. To that end, we look to the new Foreign Minister, our friend and colleague, His Excellency Mr. François Fall, to energize his country in playing that constructive role. In that connection, I also wish, on behalf of the Secretary-General, to commend Morocco for the King's efforts to convene a follow-up Rabat summit with the leaders of the three Mano River Union countries. I know that the summit has been repeatedly postponed — for good reasons I am sure. But we would nevertheless want to encourage Morocco to persevere.

Given that the situations in Liberia and Sierra Leone cannot be addressed in isolation, some Member States have shown interest in establishing a contact group on the Mano River Union to serve as a forum for forging a coherent agenda in support of the Rabat dialogue process and the subregion's peace efforts. We think that the time may have come for them to constitute themselves as that group.

Finally, a word on cooperation with subregional organizations: we believe that such cooperation has proved to be indispensable in pursuing the peace and security objectives of the United Nations in the Mano River region, as elsewhere in Africa and — for that matter — in the wider world. Indeed, the United Nations can greatly benefit from the many comparative advantages of those organizations, which include sound knowledge of, and close involvement in, the subregional dynamics, the personal stature and influence of leaders in the region and the existence of regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, peace-building and the promotion of regional development.

Indeed, it was precisely in view of the linkages between the countries in the subregion and the transborder challenges that they face, as well as the consequent need to interact with regional and subregional actors, that the Secretary-General recently decided to establish a high-level United Nations Office for West Africa, headed by his Special Representative, who is going to be, as the Council knows, Mr. Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. We regret the delay in the opening of the Office, but the necessary administrative and logistical arrangements are now being finalized, and Mr. Ould-Abdallah will soon be dispatched to the region. Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Mano River Union will feature high on his agenda.

**The President**: Sir Kieran, you painted quite a complex and difficult picture in terms of what is actually going on in Liberia. Given that there will be presidential elections next year and given the importance I think we all attach to there being some kind of dialogue within Liberia to ensure that we move away from the current instability, what do you think the Security Council and others in the international community can do to foster a constructive, democratically based dialogue in Liberia?

**Mr. Prendergast**: I suppose that is the $64,000 question, Madam President. The first step towards making a situation better is usually to acknowledge that you have a problem and to be willing to accept internal and external advice. We have been trying to do that.

We have been somewhat hampered because for a while we have had no head of the United Nations Peace-Building Office in Liberia. We have encountered some difficulties in appointing a head. I hope that we shall be able to overcome that obstacle soon, because that will give us some leverage and enable us to develop some traction. As I mentioned, we are aware of the efforts that the subregion is putting into that. We want to give maximum encouragement to the neighbours.

Thirdly, I think we need to encourage the elements within Liberian society who are looking for an improvement in the situation and who are pressing for national reconciliation. I am thinking here primarily of the churches in Liberia and other elements of civil society. Liberia is fortunate in that it has a vibrant civil society, and I think they are making exactly the right noises in pressing for dialogue and national reconciliation. But there has to be a response from the players within the country. I think it is also difficult to dispute that an improvement in Liberia's relations with its neighbours would also be a positive factor in helping to stabilize the situation inside the country. In fact, it is quite difficult to think of a major improvement in internal stability unless there is some improvement in those relations with the immediate neighbours. Thank you, Madam President.

**The President**: You said "thank you" in a way that indicated that you do not want me to ask any more questions. But thank you very much indeed.

**Mr. Prendergast**: You have a reputation, Madam President. So, ask away.

**The President**: We may come back to you later, Sir Kieran.

I would now like to invite the Director for West Africa of the United Nations Development Programme to take the floor.

**Mr. Mar Dieye**: Today, we are dealing with a region that, after almost 10 years of conflict, has, overall, lost 25 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), with acute losses in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone of more than 50 per cent of GDP in real terms. We are also dealing with a region with an alarming rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence. We are reaching the rate of 13 per cent in Liberia and of 7 per cent in Sierra Leone. One can understand the spillover effect that might cause in Guinea. This is also the region that ranks lowest on the human development index, hence a region with socio-economic development trends that are not so bright. Yet it is a region with promising development opportunities, given the recent return of peace in Sierra Leone. It thus behoves us to seize the moment and to help transform the emerging glimmers of hope into real development.

This Security Council workshop is very timely because it provides a unique opportunity to bring the peace and development dimensions together in helping shape and chart the way forward in the Mano River Union zone. It will not be the work of a moment to undo the accumulated destructive work of 10 years of evil forces. Not only will we need to act immediately, but we must also set our action within a longer time frame in order to integrate progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, is actively engaged in this process and is implementing various strategic initiatives and programmes on the ground to support the reconstruction and recovery process. These include the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in Guinea and Liberia, the poverty reduction strategies in Guinea and Sierra Leone and the United Nations strategy to support national recovery and peace-building in Sierra Leone.

But from a development perspective, we are currently facing the following constraints on the way forward: first, insufficient financial resources to implement, at the national levels and on a wider scale, quick-impact projects that would help consolidate peace and prevent the risk of reversal; secondly, weak institutional capacities which then limit the various economies' absorptive capacities. In the three countries we have absorptive capacity ranging from 40 per cent to 60 per cent, and one can see how limited our effectiveness may be; thirdly, dysfunctional productive capacities, including the basic economic and social infrastructures such as roads, schools and health facilities; and fourthly — and this is critical — the absence of an adequate coordinating policy mechanism at the regional level to synchronize the various programmes in the three countries and to deal with cross-border issues.

To address these various constraints, we see the way forward as follows.

First, programme funding should be secured at the national level through the following mechanisms.

The first mechanism is the donor forum on the Sierra Leone strategy document for recovery and peace-building, which is scheduled for the last quarter of this year in Paris, which we are organizing with the World Bank and the Government. I wish to inform the Council that at the end of this month, on 31 July and 1 August, we will be holding an in-country round table in Freetown to discuss the governance programme that the Government is putting forward to deal with civil

service reform, the problem of accountability in rebuilding the failed State, the problem of corruption, the problem of local governance and so on.

Efforts should be made to revive the project of organizing a special consultation on Guinea to address the impact of the conflict. The economy of Guinea has been severely taxed by the conflict in the subregion. It has affected its public finances and its productive capacity. I think that we have once again to put on the table the issue of special consultations, which we were discussing two years ago.

Also important is the implementation of a policy of constructive engagement in Liberia — and again, here we agree with the Department of Political Affairs that we cannot have a long-term policy of containment. This can be done by addressing on a wider scale the humanitarian crisis, community development programmes that promote sustainable livelihoods and the creation of job opportunities, peace education, and the promotion of a system of just and accountable governance. This policy can leverage upon existing United Nations programmes on the ground, which, unfortunately, lack sufficient funding.

The second line of strategy, in my view, would be to mandate the United Nations Office for West Africa to prepare, jointly with the United Nations country team, and in association with the Mano River Union secretariat in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a coordinated and integrated United Nations strategic framework document that will not only back the Rabat peace process but also help in building confidence among the parties by focusing on key cross-border initiatives on issues such as HIV/AIDS, fishing rights and cross-border trade. This would include, of course, supporting the parties, civil society and entrepreneurs on the ground.

I will conclude by highlighting the fact that UNDP, through its Regional Cooperation Framework, is finalizing a support programme for ECOWAS and the United Nations Office for West Africa to address some of the various challenges in the subregion that I have outlined. This would complement the support that we are already providing for the implementation of the ECOWAS moratorium on small arms, and the involvement of civil society, including the Mano River Union Women's Network, in the peace process.

UNDP will also lead the efforts of the United Nations country teams on the ground in advocating for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Mar Dieye in particular for the thoughts he has given on the way forward. I was struck by the comments that he made about what is needed in each country. I would ask him to tell me if, in his view, he thinks that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) actually has the right kind of machinery in place for the coordination and integration of institutional development programmes at a subregional level? He focused very much on what needs to be done in each of the countries within the Mano River Union, but on a subregional basis, does the capacity exist?

**Mr. Mar Dieye**: I must say here that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been a kind of precursor in terms of this integrated framework. Indeed, we already have our Regional Cooperation Framework, which is helping to implement programmes at the regional level. As I said earlier, we are supporting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) moratorium on small arms; we have a regional programme to help civil society participate in the ongoing peace process; and we have a regional programme that is promoting entrepreneur development, with a focus on women entrepreneurs. All of these instruments are available to us. What has been lacking so far is the political framework to secure our economic and development efforts.

I think that, now that we have the United Nations Office in Dakar, we have the right mix so that collectively we can do optimum work on the ground.

**The President**: I have one follow-up question on economic development. Mr. Mar Dieye talked about where the region sits in terms of the Human Development Index. We all know that if a country or a region really wants to develop quickly, then we need to attract investment and to retain capital in-country. It seems to me, given what Mr. Mar Dieye and, indeed, what Sir Kieran said, that we are very far from that in this region. What should the priorities be to enable us to get to the place where economic development becomes a reality?

**Mr. Mar Dieye**: This is an excellent question which touches on the crux of the matter. You know, Madam President, that investment will just follow

where good governance, peace and security are, and that has been lacking in the subregion. That is why our key priority in all three countries is to ensure that governance is restored, so that the confidence level is high enough to attract investment. UNDP will continue to work along these lines.

**The President**: I give the floor to the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

**Mr. Diarra** (Economic Community of West African States) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, it is a great honour for me to represent the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at this Security Council workshop on lessons learned from resolving the crisis in Sierra Leone, on questions related to the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building, and, finally, on the subregional dimension of the resolution of this conflict.

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Mr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas — who could not be here today because of a previous engagement — I should like to thank members of the Security Council for having organized this workshop, and in particular the current President, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, head of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, for having kindly invited ECOWAS to participate in this workshop.

ECOWAS welcomes the convening of this meeting, which is very timely because it seeks to consolidate the hard-won peace in Sierra Leone from the broader perspective of the Mano River Union. Here let me recall the exemplary partnership developed by ECOWAS, the United Nations, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Organization of African Unity that made possible the signing of the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), thereby putting an end to atrocities that will remain seared into the memory of humanity for all time.

I should like also to recall and commend our firm resolve and our unreserved determination in the face of the events of May 2000, when the RUF attempted to call the peace process into question. I wish in this respect to commend in particular the contribution made by the United Kingdom, which was a decisive factor at the time in helping to stabilize the situation.

Finally, I wish to recall and welcome the very close cooperation between the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOWAS, which made possible the relaunching of the peace process. It is therefore thanks to the combined efforts of all concerned that we have achieved the positive results that we can now welcome.

We wish to express gratitude on behalf of the peoples of West Africa. ECOWAS welcomes this workshop, which is consonant with the commendable efforts made to bring about, though our shared will, a lasting peace throughout the entire subregion, which is a sine qua non for any development.

The States of the Mano River Union, particularly Sierra Leone and Liberia, have always received special attention from the political bodies of ECOWAS responsible for matters of peace and security. Whether it be through the Conference of Heads of State and Government or through the Mediation and Security Council, set up in the framework of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, many decisions have been taken to end the conflicts that have cast a pall over this part of our subregion. Those various decisions and recommendations form the basis of the policy on subregional peace and security. The main elements of that policy for the Mano River Union region are in turn based on three pillars: internal peace in Sierra Leone, peace in the Mano River region, and the subregional context. I shall first take up the issue of domestic peace in Sierra Leone.

Peace in Sierra Leone was sufficiently discussed this morning. ECOWAS believes that the disarmament and reintegration programme should be continued. State institutions should be reformed and strengthened. The programme aimed at reconstruction, rehabilitation and national reconciliation should also be continued. Finally, we need to carry out a policy of democracy and justice, establish the rule of law and gain the support of the international community. These various points have already been adequately covered.

The second element of our policy is peace in the Mano River Union region. That means peace in each State of the region. We cannot talk about peace in the Mano River Union region without talking about peace in Liberia. It is for that reason that ECOWAS has a very specific policy with regard to promoting peace in Liberia. ECOWAS heads of State have given Presidents

Obasanjo and Wade a mandate to organize a discussion so that the three heads of State can meet around the table. ECOWAS also welcomed the Rabat initiative, which has made it possible for these heads of State to meet and to relaunch the Mano River Union mechanism. The second axis of that strategy is non-tolerance for the presence of armed gangs. We think that the presence of such gangs was one of the causes of the conflict.

There is the relaunching of the Mano River Union mechanism, the issue of refugees, and internal peace in Liberia. I would like to emphasize internal peace in Liberia. We confronted a difficulty during the Sierra Leone crisis, namely, that we thought that there could not be peace in Sierra Leone unless there was peace in Liberia. It is for that reason that we joined together to act to end the linkage between Liberia and Sierra Leone, that is to say, to end the linkage between diamonds, arms trafficking and Sierra Leone. I think that link is what should today lead us to take a step forward to consider the question of peace in Liberia, so that that peace can be a factor for stability and peace in Sierra Leone.

ECOWAS has taken a number of steps towards that end. I should like to refer to some initiatives whose results should make it possible to restore peace in Liberia. Those include Liberian civil society initiatives as part of preparations for a national reconciliation conference. There have also been initiatives among Liberia's religious councils. Finally, a meeting has just been held among representatives of political parties and civil society organizations.

The last pillar of our strategy is the subregional context. No peace policy that brings together one, two or three of the countries of the Mano River Union can be viable unless it is part of the ECOWAS framework as such. That is why we say that the Security Council should support the efforts of ECOWAS. We are sure that with the support of the Security Council, peace will be restored in Liberia. That peace will be a stabilizing factor in Sierra Leone, the region and the entire community of West African States.

**The President**: Thank you for those comments and for setting out the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as you see it.

You described a role that sounds very resource-intensive, and that I am sure is resource intensive in terms of being able to work with the different countries to not only bring about peace but to try to consolidate peace. Does ECOWAS have the financial and institutional capacity to meet subregional requirements? If not, are there proposals or plans for expansion?

**Mr. Diarra** (*spoke in French*): ECOWAS is a subregional organization that is concerned with integration, with economics, with development. We believe that development can take place only if there is peace. With respect to development and integration, we do in fact have very specific programmes to deal with economic and monetary issues, as well as issues related to the fight against poverty. All of those issues will be part of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We do have the willingness. Of course, we do not have all the means. But we think that, with the willingness and confidence of our partners, we can move forward.

**The President**: You talked about the importance of the Security Council bolstering the efforts of ECOWAS. Did you have any specific things in mind that the Security Council might do?

**Mr. Diarra** (*spoke in French*): What the Security Council can do is, first of all, to strengthen the credibility of the decisions taken by ECOWAS. What are our decisions? Our decisions have been to firmly condemn attacks in Liberia, not to tolerate the taking of power by unconstitutional means, to condemn Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), to put pressure on various parties in Liberia to bring them to the negotiating table, and to create the conditions for dialogue in Liberia, making it possible to create favourable conditions for elections next year. That is what we expect from the Security Council.

**The President**: I will now call on Ambassador Koonjul in his capacity as Chairman of the ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

**Mr. Koonjul** (Mauritius): I am going to skip the courtesies, in the interest of time. But I would like to assure you, Madam President, that we are indeed very pleased to see you presiding over this very important meeting and to have the Ministers from Guinea and Sierra Leone around the Council table.

We would like to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast, Mr. Dieye and Mr. Diarra for their very important statements. We were also very pleased to see the

President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Šimonović, at the Council table this morning. We hope that his presence will not be restricted to debates on Africa only.

The topic of our discussion this afternoon — the way forward: developing a coordinated action plan for the Mano River Union — is very timely in order to build upon the glimmer of hope that is being observed in Sierra Leone at present. One of the tasks of the Security Council's ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa is indeed to see how to promote confidence-building measures in the Mano River region as a means of promoting durable and sustainable peace and stability in the whole region. The Group has had a preliminary exchange of views on this issue, with the contribution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the International Crisis Group. It is the intention of the Working Group to invite, in its future meetings, countries of the region, subregional organizations and other interested parties to pursue further discussions. As an initial step, various recommendations have been examined by the Working Group, and this is going to continue.

The question of peace and stability in the Mano River region has to be viewed from a regional perspective. The insurgency in Liberia, the problem of refugees in Guinea and Sierra Leone and the restoration of peace in the latter country are all interrelated. Any approach to resolving these problems should be closely coordinated with initiatives undertaken by the African Union, particularly by its Peace and Security Ministerial Coordinating Committee, with the Mano River Union countries and with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We believe that we should work very closely with the African Union, and more particularly with the leaders of ECOWAS, who could use their good offices to bring peace and stability to the region. Inconsistencies among the policies of the Security Council, the African Union and subregional organizations will not be in the best interest of the region.

The launching of the African Union and the implementation of the process of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) represent a new dynamic for bringing peace and stability to Africa as a whole. The principles of the African Union Charter, namely democracy, good governance and respect for human rights, as well as NEPAD's own principles, implemented through its peer review mechanism, economic and corporate governance, and subregional and regional approaches to development provide an excellent basis for a new approach to peace-building and overall stability and development in the continent. The Security Council and the international community as a whole will need to extend all their assistance to help African countries uphold and promote these principles.

The new situation in Sierra Leone following the peaceful elections, which we most heartily welcome, will no doubt be a catalyst in helping the whole Mano River Union region move away from conflict, instability and lack of socio-economic development to a more prosperous phase, provided that the necessary support and focus are given. In that regard, the recently established Economic and Social Council ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict should give the necessary attention to Sierra Leone.

Let me now briefly dwell on the situation in Liberia, to which many speakers referred this morning. It is clear that instability in Liberia will have adverse effects on peace in the region. The Council, together with the African Union and the leaders of the region should, in our view, find ways of engaging constructively with Liberia rather than isolating it any further. The sanctions imposed on Liberia have been of tremendous help in bringing peace to Sierra Leone, but if we want real regional peace, then we will have to engage in a process that will help us attain our objectives. I say that in the light of the elections that are going to take place in Liberia next year. It could be extremely important for the Council and the international community to engage in some kind of constructive dialogue that will further the objectives of the Council and peace in the region.

The success of any action plan for the Mano River Union rests on the degree of trust and confidence among the members of the Union. Every effort should be made to encourage frequent meetings at the highest level among the countries of the region in order to reduce tension and rebuild trust and confidence. In this context, we welcome the summit hosted by the King of Morocco at Rabat, bringing together the Presidents of the countries of the Mano River Union. Such initiatives aimed at reviving social, political and economic integration deserve to be encouraged in the region.

Likewise, it will be in the interest of the countries of the region if they invest seriously in bilateral talks.

One important field of cooperation among countries of the region could be the joint monitoring of borders with the help of the international community. The Mano River Union countries could work out modalities leading to agreements on joint monitoring of borders and they could be encouraged to enter into agreements by which they would undertake not to support rebel activities in neighbouring countries. The international community could be invited to provide assistance in reactivating the implementation of the existing Mano River Union pacts and agreements.

There is a vital role for the United Nations Office for West Africa to play in developing a coordinated plan for the Mano River region. I am glad that the representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and of ECOWAS, who spoke earlier, mentioned this. The idea of the Office assisting in carrying out an audit of the armed groups in the region should be implemented as soon as possible. The findings of such an audit exercise could be used to plan a full and comprehensive process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement.

The United Nations Office for West Africa could also assess the requirements of the countries of the Mano River Union in the fields of security, economic, social and development issues. The assistance of the Mano River Union in the field will be very helpful. The outcome of this exercise could provide the basis for all the agencies involved in the region to prioritize their responses to the post-conflict peace-building needs of the countries individually and of the region as a whole.

In the field of post-conflict peace-building, relief and development assistance by the international community should be geared towards capacity-building in the individual countries of the region, rather than only responding to immediate needs. The UNDP and the Bretton Woods institutions should adapt flexible financial instruments to strike a balance between the need for macroeconomic stability and the peace-related priorities of the Governments of the Mano River Union countries. For instance, a country such as Guinea, which has been hosting a huge number of refugees, deserves international assistance. We should not overlook the fact that, if refugee problems are not addressed adequately, there will be the potential for further conflict. It is, therefore, important to find a long-term solution to the problem of refugees.

The illegal exploitation of natural resources and the illicit flow of arms in the Mano River region have been important destabilizing factors. The capacity of the countries of the region to strictly observe the diamond certification scheme and the relevant arms control programmes, such as the ECOWAS moratorium on small arms and light weapons, should be substantially reinforced with a view to securing peace in the region. While we recognize that Guinea and Sierra Leone have put in place diamond certification regimes, it is important that we impress upon the Republic of Liberia the importance of setting up such a scheme in order to ensure a coordinated approach in the region, and that we assist it in doing so.

We believe that it would also be useful to have a contact group on the Mano River Union countries, as we have in the case of Somalia, bringing together all stakeholders in the conflict, where we can discuss means of advancing durable peace in the region.

Finally, the countries of the Mano River Union have many things in common. The cultures, languages, history, geography and socio-economic and political backgrounds of the three countries are factors that bind them. We must build up confidence in the region using these commonalties. The establishment of relationships among civil societies, students, scholars, the private sector and businessmen of the countries of the region will help in promoting confidence. Already the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network and other non-governmental organizations are doing a wonderful job. It is important that we encourage them.

Civil society, we believe, could also play a major role in mediation efforts to bring about peace and reconciliation. The private sector should be given a greater role in the region's integration process. We think that the international community should be exhorted to fully support such a process.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Koonjul in particular for his thoughts and ideas on the way forward.

I would now like to give the floor to Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia.

**Mr. Mahbubani** (Singapore): In the interest of time, I will just say that I agree with every

complimentary word that Ambassador Koonjul just spoke. But I want to add two other important compliments. First, I would like to express our strong support for this new concept of the workshop. I think that this is the first time that we are having a workshop in the Security Council Chamber. It is a useful idea to work on, because one of the structural weaknesses of the Council is that even though we have been sent here to shoulder the collective security responsibilities of the United Nations, more often than not we wear our national hats rather than our collective hat around this table. I hope that in this dialogue that we are having, we will focus on the collective responsibilities that we face as members of the Security Council.

The second compliment we would like to pay is to the United Kingdom for the exceptional role that it has played in Sierra Leone. I think that it is no secret that without the significant British support we would not see the success that we see today in Sierra Leone compared to the situation that we saw just two or three years ago. When the history books are written, historians will be puzzled as to why that nation carried out such an exceptionally altruistic act in international relations.

As we look ahead, I think that the best contribution we could make is to look at what might be the problem areas. I would like in the five minutes that I have to focus on two key problem areas and, if there is time, two or three other minor points.

The first key problem area, which has already been touched upon, is the sore question of resources. Here, I shall touch on a sacred cow that I have occasionally touched upon in previous discussions of the Council: how do you move smoothly from peacekeeping to peace-building? The fundamental structural problem we have is that when it comes to peacekeeping, we have scales of assessments; we can generate $500 million or $800 million. In the case of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), as I have said in the Security Council, as of 31 December last year, we had already spent $1 billion on UNAMSIL — probably $1.5 billion by now.

But, if I may use an analogy, when you complete a peace-building operation, it is like walking through a garden which has been well tended with a wonderful sprinkler system. You remove the sprinkler system and then say now the garden will depend on people walking in with buckets of water. It is very hard to bring in enough buckets of water to replace a sprinkler system that is established in the garden.

This is a structural problem that I think applies to all peacekeeping operations, but certainly to the case of UNAMSIL, which has been one of the best-funded operations. Look at the discussion that we have already had today, for example when Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno spoke this morning about the difficulty of raising $13.5 million — which I think is less than 1 per cent of what we have already on UNAMSIL — to pay for disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation (DDR). If you do not take care of DDR and do not find a way out for the combatants, you are basically giving the combatants an incentive to return to combat, because there is no other choice for them. If you have already spent $1.5 billion on UNAMSIL, why can you not find a secure system of funding?

There are, by the way, very strong theological arguments that have been put forward as to why you cannot have assessed contributions for peace-building. I think there is some merit to those arguments. But can we not create a twilight zone, so that when we move from peacekeeping to peace-building we ensure that we do not remove the sprinkler system completely? Can we not have a phased removal of the sprinkler system, and ensure that resources continue to be plowed in for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the other ex-combatants and for their integration when the peacekeeping operation is finished? Here, I think, it is those countries which have invested the most in the success of UNAMSIL that have the greatest vested interest in ensuring a smooth transition to peace-building.

The second problem that I was going to touch upon is one, frankly, that I am glad has already been touched upon frequently this afternoon -- the whole question of the regional approach. We have succeeded in creating a pool of stability in Sierra Leone. There is a pool of stability in Guinea. But now, as Sir Kieran Prendergast said, we have come full circle in Liberia. We have gone from civil war to elections and peace and back now to civil war. Everybody has agreed, from what I can tell, that all the success we have secured in the Mano River Union will be endangered if we do not fix the problems in Liberia.

Here, the question that you posed, Madam President, to Sir Kieran — what can the Security Council do? — should have actually been posed to the

Security Council. If I speak honestly, as you say, in my capacity as Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Liberia, I know the sticks that the Committee on Liberia is applying to Liberia, but I do not know what carrots are being applied. We had a very frank discussion at lunch today — which we cannot repeat, obviously, in this Chamber — about how to find possible solutions for Liberia. But the theme that is emerging is the need to find a policy of constructive engagement of some sort with Liberia. I am looking at the Human Rights Watch report that someone dropped on our table here. They all say, let us focus on Liberia. I have not read this report, but that is what the theme is. So I hope, as a result of this debate, that we will find a fuller answer to the question that you posed to Sir Kieran.

I would like to raise three minors points that I just think we should pay attention to. One is, of course, that in the case of Sierra Leone we have set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a Special Court. How to find the balance between the two is always a challenge. Secondly, in terms of the Special Court that has been set up, the question of resources has come up already. Of course, we do not want to see a repetition of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, which have become enormously expensive. That is why there is no real formal court for Sierra Leone. But how do you ensure that there are enough resources for this?

My third and final point builds on a point that Ambassador Koonjul just made about the question of refugees — and I agree with him that Guinea has been exceptionally generous in hosting refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia. Can we in the Council begin to look at refugees not purely as a humanitarian problem, but, as Ambassador Koonjul said, as a leading indicator that conflict may be on the way? Perhaps we should monitor the refugee flows that are taking place. If they begin to rise, then clearly this is an indication that trouble is coming. If we are looking forward, we should pay attention to this.

**The President**: Ambassador Mahbubani's analogy about the sprinkler system leads me to think that perhaps we should not be thinking about people coming along with buckets, but about building replacement sprinkler systems. But this is something that I hope that others will return to.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

**Mr. Bennouna** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to say how grateful we are to you, Madam, and to Ambassador Greenstock for having organized this workshop — this laboratory of ideas, which has been quite lively. I am a little uncomfortable speaking just after Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, who is well known for being thought-provoking in the Council. In any case, it is an excellent and very useful idea.

I would also to pay tribute to the United Kingdom for the role that it has played in the restoration of peace in the region. I do not want to speak about leadership, because that could have other connotations, but it is a very positive role, and one that is greatly appreciated by the international community.

I would like finally to welcome the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone and our former colleague, the Foreign Minister of Guinea, our friend François Fall. I told him before he left that he would often come back to New York, because, in the end, ministers for foreign affairs prefer coming to New York and doing the work themselves here rather than sending instructions from their capitals. In any case, it is always a pleasure to see him here.

One may wonder why Morocco is here. First of all, it is because we are African, and we have always been very interested and involved in the history and future of Africa. But we are here also because we are particularly involved in West Africa. Traditionally, Morocco has always had very close economic and cultural relations with West Africa. But we are also a cultural and geographic link between Europe and North Africa, including the Arab world, as well as between Europe and West Africa. This is a very important role, including from a religious point of view.

The second reason, it has turned out — and perhaps this is the result of the first reason — is that the heads of State of the three fraternal countries of the Mano River region, who are all aware of the regional dimension of the problem of the maintenance of peace and security in their respective countries, naturally turned towards Morocco, and in particular towards His Majesty King Mohammed VI, because they felt that it was with that head of State and that country that they could advance their regional relationships. Naturally,

we welcomed this, because, as I said, we have always had a special relationship with West Africa.

We have to add that Secretary-General Kofi Annan strongly encouraged the regional dimension and the convening of the first Rabat summit. Along with my colleagues, including François Fall, I recall that the Secretary-General greatly helped and encouraged that initiative and urged that the Rabat summit should take place, and that we begin the dialogue. The dialogue began, not easily, on 27 February, in Rabat, at the invitation of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. As the King said to the Secretary-General, "We have broken the ice."

Well, we did break the ice, and it is very important to break the ice. This means that the three heads of State spoke with each other. They lunched. They dined. They had exchanges. But I believe that they went beyond breaking the ice. They acknowledged the 1986 treaty on non-aggression and cooperation. They acknowledged that they should engage in dialogue to settle their differences. They also recognized that they had to revitalize all the security protocols. They recognized that they had to undertake a certain number of concrete measures. And they placed these on the table. They asked their Foreign Ministers to follow up. I believe that this was recalled this morning, and I need not come back to it now. As noted, there were four ministerial follow-up meetings.

We succeeded in some areas, and we failed in others. For example, the "caravan" project to restore confidence was a good idea. It has not yet materialized, but it is still on the table; we have not given it up. I think we have also done things to make the borders more secure. We have improved the possibility of border patrols at some point.

Now, I think, we have reached a stage where we have to go further. As Mr. Prendergast recalled, we are preparing a second summit. It has been delayed for both logistical and substantive reasons. The King of Morocco does not want a second summit that would be purely a matter of protocol. Let me say it clearly: he wants the second summit to be productive, where we would take a decisive step towards a settlement and towards bringing the countries closer together in order to keep the peace.

As we said, diplomats are working today to put in place the elements of fresh progress in peacekeeping, before we convene the summit. That proves that we take this very seriously and that this will not simply be a meeting for a photo opportunity or to appear on television. Even though some people find it rather pleasant to appear on television, that is not enough.

The other substantive matter on which I can speak briefly is the recent developments in Liberia, about which Mr. Prendergast and other participants have spoken. These events are a matter of concern for all who wish for peace in the region, and who are working for peace in the region. Of course, these developments are worrisome; they have once again destabilized the borders, if only because of the flow of refugees into Guinea and Sierra Leone. This once again has created or exacerbated a pocket of instability.

Everything that has been done has been complementary. The United Nations, of course, must probably strengthen its presence in Liberia in a way that it decides; it may require additional resources. The representative of the subregional organization has just spoken here: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has a very important complementary role to play in bringing together the stakeholders in the conflict in Liberia. I think that this relates to the Rabat summit. The effort to convene a meeting of the stakeholders, centred perhaps on President Wade, to begin the process of restoring civil peace in Liberia, is also linked a Rabat summit.

There should be an agreement on some principles of good governance, especially for Liberia. Otherwise, there will be no peace in Liberia, and there will be no peace anywhere in the Mano River region. I believe that this is the main issue on which the international community should probably exert pressure. We in Morocco believe that if we let things progress on their own, nothing will happen from within Liberia, and that pressure has to come from outside. That is the role of the international community, and it is also the role of ECOWAS in coordination with the United Nations.

With all modesty, His Majesty the King of Morocco is always ready to help his African brothers in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, to bring them closer together, to restore peace in that region, which is very dear to us. This peace, which must be established by the leaders, should benefit the generations of the region who have already greatly suffered as a result of war. And the young people of this region have probably experienced the most appalling suffering in the world.

Perhaps this is a model on which we should reflect. Perhaps this is not the place to do so, but we have to draw certain conclusions about the need for complementarity among all the efforts that I have mentioned.

**The President**: I think we all recognize the importance of regional initiatives, and in particular the importance of what went on in Rabat. I hope that it will be possible to coordinate the different regional initiatives which have been taken in the Mano River Union.

**Mr. Levitte** (France) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to welcome the two ministers who have honoured us with their presence today, in particular my neighbour at the Council table, François Fall. I also thank you, Madam President, for your presence and for the excellent way in which you are guiding our debate today.

I would like to begin by paying special tribute to the United Kingdom for its determined commitment in service of peace in Sierra Leone through the presence of ground troops, which at a particularly difficult time made it possible to restore full credibility to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and through the United Kingdom's resolute commitment to rebuilding the State and the economy of a devastated country.

We are here in a brainstorming session. I would like to note three things.

First of all, personal relations between heads of State are a key factor for peace in this region, as indeed elsewhere in Africa. Restoring good relations among the three presidents of the Mano River Union is a priority, and that is why France welcomes in particular the role now played by the Rabat process. I salute the commitment of King Mohammed VI to the peace process in the Mano River Union region.

My second point is there can be no peace in the region unless there is peace among the three countries — I would say within each of these three countries. What is striking today is that, if we have a clear strategy that is working for Sierra Leone, we do not have a comprehensive strategy for Liberia. Of course, we have the sanctions committee, and I welcome the role played by the Ambassador of Singapore. However, a sanctions committee is not enough for providing a strategy. I entirely support what General Diarra has said on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We discourage any seizure of power by force, and we must condemn Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) in its attempt to do this. We need to assist all political forces in Liberia to prepare as best they can for the presidential elections to be held in 2003. Accordingly, the statement adopted last week in Ouagadougou seemed very positive to us. One understands that we need to elaborate, in partnership with the other stakeholders, a true strategy for Liberia, just as we did for Sierra Leone.

From that standpoint, today's dialogue, including with ECOWAS and Morocco, is particularly useful. We believe ECOWAS deserves encouragement in their its efforts. The United Nations should, for example, help ECOWAS set up the four early warning regional centres.

I would like to refer specifically to four elements. First, and this point was made by other speakers, we need to set up the contact group of interested countries within the Mano River Union as quickly as possible. This group should be limited in composition, but it needs to be established urgently.

Second is another urgent matter. We need a representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Liberia. I am sure the United Nations Office in Liberia should be strengthened. I know this is not easy, because President Taylor has the unfortunate habit of rejecting people proposed to him. But I would like to ask Under-Secretary-General Prendergast, what stage are discussions between the Department of Political Affairs and the Liberian authorities on this point.

The third idea was mentioned by Sir Kieran, the upcoming installation in Dakar of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa. How does he see the role of Mr. Ould-Abdallah, among the other stakeholders — that is, ECOWAS and the Rabat process, lead by the King of Morocco?

The fourth and last idea concerns the Rabat process. If it makes good progress in coming months, could we take advantage of the General Assembly session this autumn to invite to a meeting of the Security Council the three foreign ministers of the region? We already have two right here. Perhaps with the three heads of State we can crystallize the progress that will have taken place in the intervening period

through the activities of Morocco and give additional momentum to the peace process in the region of the Mano River Union.

**The President**: You asked some specific questions which I will ask Sir Kieran to respond to at a slightly later stage. I know we are due to move to speakers' responses now, but I would like to hear from our speaker from the World Bank before I move to speaker responses at a later stage. Thank you for your comments and also your idea about a meeting in the margins of the General Assembly later this year.

I would like to invite Mr. Fichtl, the Senior Social Protection Specialist for Regional Human Development of the World Bank, to take the floor.

**Mr. Fichtl**: I would like to echo the sentiments of previous speakers as to the timeliness and relevance of the workshop. I would like to focus my observations on Sierra Leone. I believe this also offers important lessons for developing a coordinated and comprehensive approach towards Liberia.

A real window of opportunity for sustainable peace and economic recovery exists following the disarmament and demobilization of about 68,000 ex-combatants in Sierra Leone and the re-election of President Kabbah on 14 May 2002. Immediate priorities are the return of displaced populations; reintegration of ex-combatants; rehabilitation of the basic social and economic infrastructure, especially in areas most affected by the conflict; expansion of access by the poor to social services, markets and assets; and the facilitation of reconciliation.

A major challenge for the Government and its international partners will be to address the needs of the youth. Forty-five percent of Sierra Leone's population is under the age of fifteen. Their potential needs to be utilized, and they need to be equipped with necessary skills to earn an income. This will depend, to a large degree, on an environment conducive to economic growth, in such a manner that a maximum number of people benefit from the growth and have a chance to find employment.

Looking at the lessons learned from the point of view of the World Bank, clearly the early engagement of development partners, including the World Bank, in support of the lead role played by the United Nations, ECOWAS, and the United Kingdom has paid off and contributed to the significant progress made. We have learned that in complex emergencies, coordinated and complementary efforts focusing on humanitarian assistance, political mediation, security sector reform and early developmental efforts dramatically increase the impact of the international community's response. This coordinated and complementary approach led to the success in Sierra Leone thus far.

We also learned that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes (DDR), as important as they are, cannot be used to break a political impasse, nor can they guarantee security in a fragile environment. DDR programmes are more likely to succeed and to be sustained if they are anchored in a larger peace process that is based on political commitment and on the means to provide a minimum of security.

Civil society understood that in Sierra Leone the large majority of former combatants were both perpetrators and victims, and that their reintegration was key to rapid and sustainable recovery and reconciliation. In that regard, the international community correctly pursued a two-pronged approach, focusing simultaneously on individual ex-combatants and on supporting communities. Financial assistance to complete those programmes should not diminish at this critical juncture. We also believe that the nascent Truth and Reconciliation Commission has an important role to play for Sierra Leone's future. Complementing investments in bricks and mortar, the Commission deserves to be fully funded.

More specifically with respect to the World Bank and its efforts through the International Development Association (IDA) programme, the Bank is focused on new financial assistance to support the transition out of conflict through budget support to maintain key Government functions, projects in support of the disarmament and demobilization programme and the reintegration of ex-combatants, and community-oriented rapid rehabilitation efforts.

Complementing that financial assistance, the Bank has provided technical support to empower the Government to lead demobilization and recovery efforts and to encourage partners to support a comprehensive recovery framework. The Bank supported the Government in donor coordination and in broadening the initially very small donor base through the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund in support of the DDR programme. In collaboration with the

United Nations, and with the personal leadership and support of Secretary-General Kofi Annan — which we would like to acknowledge here — the Bank to date has been able to raise $31.5 million in support of the DDR programme, of which $28.5 million has been disbursed thus far. In addition, as my colleague from the United Nations Development Programme mentioned, the Bank has facilitated regular donor meetings and will convene a Consultative Group meeting, most likely in Paris in October.

In these transition situations, Government capacity is limited and constrained. In Sierra Leone, the Bank helped the Government to establish an independent and effective implementation mechanism in two key areas: the demobilization programme and a social fund to finance a community-oriented rehabilitation programme.

In summary, IDA assistance, built on ongoing humanitarian assistance — for example, the social fund was disbursed directly to national and international non-governmental organizations — focused its early development assistance on complementing the efforts of key partners in the political and security areas. We find that timeliness and flexibility are of great importance in a rapidly evolving post-conflict situation.

As to the challenges ahead, stability in Sierra Leone is linked to regional stability in Guinea and in Liberia. Continued leadership and close cooperation of the partners key to Sierra Leone's recovery — including the Economic Community of West African States, the United Kingdom, the United States and the United Nations — are required for regional stability. Disenchanted ex-combatants pose a threat if they are not reintegrated into society and the economy; reconciliation remains a major challenge. In addition, the success of the transition to date is no guarantee that the root causes of the conflict will be successfully addressed in the future; the challenge is with the Government and its development partners. For example, if resources — including the proceeds from mineral resources — are not used equitably and transparently, there is a danger that latent tensions will re-emerge and will undermine stability.

The Bank's strategy for the immediate future builds on the Government's framework for poverty reduction. It will focus on consolidating peace and security through resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration, supporting governance, targeting institutional reforms and economic growth through a stable macroeconomic environment, expanding access to the financial services infrastructure and expanding the access of the poor to social services, including through better public expenditure management.

The proposed lending programme for fiscal years 2002-2004 amounts to approximately $205 million. New projects are being finalized this fiscal year, with the Government supporting the areas of education, health care and community rehabilitation, along with continued budgetary support. The Bank has also committed resources to assist the Government in protecting Sierra Leone against the threat to which it is most vulnerable in a post-conflict transition: that of HIV/AIDS.

Lastly, Sierra Leone reached the decision point in the framework of the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative earlier this year, in March. HIPC relief amounts to approximately $600 million in terms of net present value, of which $122 million will be provided by the IDA.

In closing, allow me once again to thank you, Madam President, for affording us the opportunity to address the Security Council. Indeed, that reflects the close cooperation we have enjoyed in working with the United Nations and with other key partners in Sierra Leone.

**The President**: Mr. Fichtl, you spoke about the support given to Sierra Leone during the transitional period. In the light of that experience, is the Bank prepared to move into peace-building activity before a conflict is fully over?

**Mr. Fichtl**: I think that is a question which we all have to ask ourselves: if all of us, as partners, missed opportunities in Sierra Leone. With hindsight, I think there were missed opportunities. Are we going to engage in peace-building in other cases? I might not be the right person to answer that, as we are talking about mandate issues, in which we have to coordinate very closely with the United Nations and with other partners. Our focus is on development issues, and I think the question there is whether the development assistance is targeted in such a way that it contributes to diminishing the risk of conflict. If a conflict has arisen, I believe the challenge is not to crowd out the development partners, but rather to bring them in as early as possible.

In that context, I should like to make an observation: I would be a bit careful about expanding the mandate of peacekeeping operations, for example, to include rehabilitation and development efforts, but would rather focus them on their priority mandate and, on the other hand, try to engage the development partners as strongly and as early as possible.

**The President**: Clearly, this is something to which we will have to return. Moving from peacekeeping to peace-building, I think, is the core of some of the issues we have been discussing this afternoon.

**Mr. Wang** Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, Madam President, allow me to welcome you to New York to preside over this meeting. I also wish to welcome Foreign Minister Koroma and Foreign Minister Fall, and to express our appreciation to the United Kingdom presidency for the initiative to convene this meeting.

I focus my remarks today on two points. First, the situation of the internal conflict in the host country of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, the aspirations of its people, the attitudes of the neighbouring countries and the unity of the international community are very important conditions for the success of the mission.

In Sierra Leone, what is right and wrong between the Government and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) is quite clear. The parties to the conflict are few, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has a relatively united position on the conflict. Once it was isolated and had come under tremendous external pressure, RUF disintegrated in relatively short order. The timely dispatch of troops by the United Kingdom played an important role in this process.

In contrast, the United Nations has had to face more complicated problems in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where there is a complex mix of parties to the conflicts. Regional countries are of several minds about these conflicts, and it has proved hard to forge consensus in the international community on these issues.

The success of the United Nations peacekeeping operations hinges on a combination of factors inside and outside the areas of operation. Under given circumstances, the proper resolution of external questions could become the key to progress in the peace process.

*Sir Jeremy Greenstock took the Chair.*

Secondly, peace in Sierra Leone cannot be separated from the regional environment of the Mano River Union. Security in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea is closely related among the three, a fact recognized by all. Sanctions against Liberia have played an important role in the peace process for Sierra Leone in that they have led to the isolation and eventual collapse of RUF. If the situation in Liberia further deteriorates, it might produce a spillover effect into Sierra Leone, and even into Guinea. Right now there are differences of opinion between the Security Council and regional organizations regarding sanctions against Liberia. We need to consider seriously how the Security Council can strengthen coordination with regional organizations in this regard.

At the present time, there are a number of initiatives working towards a solution to the Liberian conflict. These initiatives are, among others, those of ECOWAS, the King of Morocco and the Mano River Union, with the latter having become increasingly active in the past two years. All of these efforts need to be coordinated in order for them to be effective.

The Secretary-General has just established an Office for West Africa and has appointed an experienced Special Representative who is well-versed in West African issues. We eagerly await his recommendations as to how the United Nations can support the initiatives to end the Liberian conflict, with a view to achieving lasting peace for the three countries in the Mano River Union.

**The President**: Baroness Amos apologizes, because she has just been called up to talk to the BBC for a few minutes. She will be coming straight back. She will be sorry to have missed your speech, Sir.

**Mr. Gatilov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to express our gratitude to the delegation of the United Kingdom for having organized this discussion, which gives us an excellent opportunity to exchange views about lessons learned and prospects for development in the peace process of the Mano River Union region.

Russia is deeply concerned at the complex situation that has emerged in this subregion, in particular the volatile situation in the border area

between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. We support the strengthening of coordination between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to resolve the situation in West Africa, including conflict prevention and resolution. Here lies the growing importance of the work done by the Security Council's ad hoc Working Group on Africa, as the link between the Council and the subregional organizations.

Like other delegations, we commend the efforts of ECOWAS and those of His Majesty Mohammed VI of Morocco to help bring about a ceasefire and to reconcile the Liberian parties, and also to build confidence among the leaders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The stabilization of the situation in the Mano River Union region is intrinsically linked to a successful conclusion of the peace process in Sierra Leone. We are pleased to note that the holding of elections on 14 May was an important landmark in the history of that country, bringing to an end the second stage of the implementation of the military concept of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for this year. The Government appointed by the newly elected President of the country, President Kabbah, has a fairly firm grip on the situation and is now getting down to resolving the priority tasks of establishing life in peace.

The activities of the United Nations and the Security Council in settling the crisis in Sierra Leone deserve the highest commendation. With the assistance of UNAMSIL, at present a total of almost 6,500 people, former members of armed groups, have been through the reintegration process. Another 20,000 people are participating in the process of reintegrating into peaceful civilian life.

The difficulties being experienced by the Government of Sierra Leone are well known when it comes to implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. This is why it is important that the international financial institutions and the donor community give the Government emergency targeted assistance. In this way, it could successfully carry out and conclude these programmes, and that, to a large extent, will determine the fate of post-conflict peace-building in that country. There is no doubt that providing security will, for the immediate future, remain a top priority for United Nations peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, until sufficient capacity is built up and the national security organs are guaranteed to be working reliably.

We think that when adjusting the further presence of UNAMSIL in that country, it will be essential to synchronize the future plans regarding the Sierra Leonean army and the recruitment and training of national police officers with plans to reduce UNAMSIL's strength, in order to prevent a security vacuum occurring after the Mission's withdrawal.

The most serious threat to stability and security in the Mano River Union region remains the ongoing bloody conflict in Liberia, where armed clashes continue between Charles Taylor's forces and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). As a result, the uncontrolled flow of Liberian refugees into Sierra Leone is growing, and they include a large number of armed elements. An escalation of fighting in Liberia could lead to a destabilization of the situation in neighbouring States.

A direct consequence of the ongoing conflict in Liberia is the deepening humanitarian crisis in the border regions between Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, as a result of which thousands of people have been forced to resettle and to become refugees. We note with gratitude that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian organizations, despite the enormous difficulties they face, continue to assist refugees who are in dire circumstances by moving them from the dangerous border areas into camps that are far removed from the borders.

Against this backdrop, the top priority is now to provide free access for humanitarian aid workers to the places where the refugees are, to guarantee their security and to create the necessary conditions that will be conducive to their voluntary return.

What is of crucial importance for resolving conflicts in the Mano River Union region and preventing their escalation is that Liberia should fully comply with the demands of the Security Council. We take note of the Monrovia statements regarding its intention to continue cooperating with the Council in this area.

In the context of the implementation of resolution 1343 (2001), we call upon all States fully to comply with the resolution's demand that they prevent the use

of their territories by armed persons and groups to prepare for and commit attacks on neighbouring countries, and that they refrain from any action that could further destabilize the situation on the borders between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

**The President**: The next speaker is the representative of Denmark. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

**Ms. Løj** (Denmark): Allow me to congratulate the presidency of the Council on convening this workshop on this important and timely topic. I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to participate in this discussion on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to touch upon two points in my brief intervention: first, the contribution of the European Union to the Mano River peace process and, secondly, some thoughts on the way forward. The engagement of the European Union in the efforts to promote peace and stability in the Mano River Union area is well known. Let me just mention a few examples. In July 2001, the European Union presidency appointed Mr. Hans Dahlgren of Sweden as its special representative to the Mano River Union countries. Furthermore, the European Union sent election observers to monitor the presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone in May 2002. The election and inauguration of President Kabbah marks another important milestone in Sierra Leone's return to democracy.

The European Union strongly supports the ongoing international efforts to promote stability in the region, including the initiative of the Kingdom of Morocco to ensure political dialogue among the Mano River Union countries, as well as the work of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on conflict prevention and confidence-building. Looking forward, the European Union will continue its full support for the Mano River Union peace process. We share the point put forward in previous interventions that it is essential that the focus be maintained on finding a regional solution. In our view, there is also a need for improved coordination and dialogue among all international and regional actors involved in the process — not least between the European Union and the United Nations, but also with ECOWAS and others — in order to identify common objectives. In that context, we note the proposal to establish a contact group for the Mano River Union peace process. We should also explore ways of strengthening the support provided to ECOWAS, including through the United Nations system.

Another important element is full implementation and compliance with United Nations sanctions, which is essential in ensuring that rebel forces are deprived of the means to wage war. Furthermore, internal conflicts in Liberia and Guinea must not be allowed to destabilize the entire subregion by spilling over into neighbouring countries. Therefore, the need to create an inclusive political dialogue and a framework for free and fair elections in Liberia and Guinea cannot be underlined strongly enough.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming the commitment of the European Union to the Mano River Union process. The outcome of this innovative and very useful workshop will help us to find new ways of strengthening international and regional efforts to promote peace and stability in the region. The European Union will cooperate fully in that endeavour.

Let me close by saying that just as the European Union will not hesitate to offer suggestions for action by other actors involved and interested in contributing to achieving these goals, we would also welcome suggestions from others as to the most constructive and helpful European Union action.

**The President**: I think one of the things that we in the European Union will also need to focus on is continuing, and perhaps enhancing, the support that we give to regional structures, and to the institutional side of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in particular, because they must get resources from somewhere to build a further capacity to be able to do the things that General Diarra was talking about earlier. I think the European Union is a prime partner with ECOWAS for that purpose.

**Mr. Ryan** (Ireland): Ireland associates itself fully with the comments just made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

The work of United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) cannot be completed until the interlocking violence and instability in the Mano River Union as a whole have been replaced by real peace and stability. I believe we all agree that the agenda followed by President Taylor of Liberia is now the critical contributing factor to the Mano River Union's profound problems. The imposition of targeted

sanctions against the Government of Liberia until it verifiably breaks its links with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has played a role in reducing chaos in the region. However, we must ask whether it is enough, given the failure hitherto of President Taylor and his Government to respond at all adequately to the clear agenda set out to him by the Council, by regional leaders and by the international community generally.

In truth, no single course of action will produce the solution. It will require linked-up, dogged and incremental action on the part of all the players — all of us. The United Nations must continue and, as necessary, strengthen its mechanisms and actions to achieve change in the behaviour of the Liberian authorities. I believe we are agreed that the regional and subregional organizations can also play their important part. I agree with Sir Kieran Prendergast's comment earlier: his call for our support for the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and civil society representation. In that regard, we have heard from General Diarra regarding ECOWAS. We understand that this presents grave difficulties for some neighbours and players and, indeed, that courage is called for on the part of many in these circumstances. The new United Nations Office for West Africa must also make a strong effort to assist, as it is surely just for this sort of challenge that we have established it. Wider involvement is called for too, such as the highly commendable Rabat process.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Koroma covered the unique hybrid judicial process to address impunity, justice and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. I believe that this very balanced approach, which, of course, takes cultural values and practice also into account, is very well suited to the case of Sierra Leone. I am also sure that it could also have relevance elsewhere in the region and more widely, as developments unfold.

In our workshop, there has been a stress on staying the course, on tenacity. This clearly applies to the United Nations, in addition to lead States. In reality, this relies much less on voluntary contributions and much more on assessed funds. In reality, including for peace-building, we must be present on the basis of assessed funds. The support which has underpinned UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) are, I believe, clear examples of this conclusion.

Finally, on human rights, strong defence and promotion of women's rights is absolutely critical. The Special Rapporteur's briefing earlier this year and her report reconfirmed appalling levels of sexual abuse. Carolyn McAskie spoke with strength on this issue this morning, and I want to underpin her most important message and proposals.

**The President**: On that last point, I know that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is beginning to distribute the report of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises, which is something — in terms of its peace and security aspects — which the Council may want to come back to, for instance, in our debate on conflict and gender on 25 July.

**Mr. Kolby** (Norway): First of all, Sir, I should like to commend you and your presidency for organizing this workshop. I think it is a very interesting format, and I think it has been a very good discussion so far. I thank those speakers that have made special contributions.

We believe that significant progress has been made towards a comprehensive and durable peace in Sierra Leone, and I should like to join those who have pointed to the integrated approach, careful consideration of the situation on the ground, careful planning, stamina and long-term commitment as explanations for this success.

The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is the main guarantor of security in Sierra Leone, and, learning from past lessons, we must avoid a premature withdrawal. The downsizing of UNAMSIL must be tied to a corresponding capacity increase in the Leonean military police and justice system.

As has been mentioned, stability in Sierra Leone is fundamental to improving the humanitarian situation and to protecting refugees and internally displaced persons. A regional preventive strategy must take into account the serious forced-displacement situation.

*Baroness Amos returned to the Chair.*

The return of refugees and internally displaced persons is a heavy burden on West African countries. Humanitarian agencies need support in their resettlement and reintegration activities.

Norway is a strong supporter of a holistic approach to peace-building, with broad participation by all parties involved, including civil society, States and the international community. In West Africa, we see a constructive engagement of the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as other regional initiatives such as the Mano River Union Rabat process. This political dialogue must continue, and the United Nations Office for West Africa should take a leading role in coordinating various ongoing initiatives.

A main concern today is the danger of the conflict in Liberia spilling over into neighbouring countries. Sierra Leone must be supported in order to be capable of defending its own borders, and the sanctions on Liberia must be as effective as possible in order to prevent President Taylor from continuing his destabilizing activities and to minimize the negative humanitarian impact.

Liberia's problems are complex, involving political, economic and military aspects. The security situation is precarious, and humanitarian organizations have difficulties operating. This must be taken seriously by the international community.

In conclusion, I should like to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the United Nations, ECOWAS, the Governments in the Mano River region, the humanitarian non-governmental organizations, and countries contributing troops as well as financial means.

**The President**: My apologies for my short absence. Can I perhaps now ask principal speakers who opened this afternoon's session if they would like to make any brief responses to the comments which have been made? There were some direct questions to Sir Kieran, so I will ask him to start, and then I move on to Mr. Mar Dieye and then to General Diarra.

**Mr. Prendergast**: I should like to respond to the direct questions and also to make a couple of points that I think arise out of the discussion.

There was a question about the peace-building office in Liberia and where we are. I would say, first of all, that we are in discussions with the Liberian authorities about amending the term of reference to make them more apt to the current situation. We want to see changes in three areas: first of all, to expand the involvement of the office in national reconciliation in Liberia; secondly, a higher profile in terms of a public information effort, which we think would be useful; and thirdly, even more emphasis on human rights. We are waiting for the response of the Government on that.

In terms of who would be the next representative of the Secretary-General, all I can really say is that our discussions with the Liberians are at a delicate point, and I do not think that it would be helpful to expand on that.

More generally, I would say that we do need coherent and well-thought-out country-specific policies for Liberia. We have been hampered by the factors I have just mentioned, but we have also been hampered by a lack of funds.

Here, if I may, I should like to take up a point made by Ambassador Mahbubani and by others. I agree rather passionately with what he said about the way one goes from relative feast to relative famine when one moves from peacekeeping to post-conflict peace-building. He used the image of a sprinkler system. The image I have used in the Council, as Council members know — and I hope that they will forgive me for repeating it — is antibiotics. When one gets a fortnight's dose of antibiotics from the doctor, the doctors says, "If you start feeling better after a week, do not stop taking the antibiotics. You have to complete the course." But my feeling is that all too often the Council does not prescribe a fortnight's antibiotics. It can prescribe a week's antibiotics, occasionally five days' worth. The risk is that the investment made is allowed to slip away, because during the period of peacekeeping, the root causes of the problem have not been eliminated, and we do not give the follow-up mission the resources to do so.

I agree very much with what Ambassador Kolby said about staying the course. I think that is a very good and accurate way of putting it.

Apart from country-specific policies in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, I think that we also need policies and a strategy to deal with the linkages between the individual component problems and between the other countries of the region. That is why the Secretary-General decided to propose a West African office. Mr. Ould-Abdallah has not taken up his duties yet. He is due to do so full-time on 1 September. I know that he is available if the Secretary-General wants to ask him to conduct particular missions.

Meanwhile, I think that we should let him get his feet under the desk before we prescribe what is his precise role in relation to Liberia. I think that more generally his role is to focus on the cracks and gaps between country-specific policies, and I would see his role as lying somewhere between a catalyst, a lubricant and a facilitator. I suspect that his role in relation to Liberia as well as to the other countries of the region will lie somewhere along that spectrum. He will not be interfering with the work being done directly, either by the Representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia or by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, but he will be looking at the linkages.

Resources will undoubtedly be needed if we are to be successful in pursuing the policies that have been discussed today in the Mano River Union area. I think that we need to be careful not to suffer from bipolar disorder — that is to say, to prescribe a whole series of rather grand-sounding policies and then to deny the system the resources which will be necessary to carry out that policy.

Just one last word, which is a comment on a point made earlier on about moving from peacekeeping to peace-building. I do not think that this is an entirely linear or sequential process. I do not think that one has to wait until one is completely into a post-conflict phase before starting to try to do things about peace-building. It is really more like a relay race, and the next runner has to start running before the baton is handed over, otherwise the process is all too likely to come to a halt.

**The President**: I give the floor to Mr. Dieye.

**Mr. Dieye**: I just want to comment, Madam President, on your concurrence with the need to have the United Nations Office in West Africa play a lead role. In that regard, I must say that we have anticipated events by applying the lessons learned in Sierra Leone. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is funding the number-two post of the Office. That shows that we will have two legs: a political leg and a development leg. Thus, in a way, we are upscaling the Sierra Leone model on the regional level. We are in a way anticipating the lessons learned in that regard.

I believe this will help us move forward. Not only will we be funding the number-two post; we will be providing resources for the Office to do what some speakers here have called vulnerability analysis and to, as the Secretary-General said this morning, anticipate crises. As I think the representative of Mauritius said, an increase in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees is a signal that a crisis is looming. We are trying to have a battery of indicators that will signal crises beforehand.

I am glad that you have focused on this issue, Madam President. UNDP pledges itself to support this process.

**The President**: I give the floor to Mr. Diarra.

**Mr. Diarra** (*spoke in French*): Among the comments that have been made in the course of this meeting, it was said that the various strategies that have been developed to deal with Sierra Leone were aimed at Sierra Leone. For instance, even the sanctions established in resolution 1343 (2001) were themselves aimed at strengthening the peace process in Sierra Leone. I believe that the Council must now try to develop a strategy specifically on Liberia, and I would like to draw the Council's attention to that matter.

Secondly, I would ask how we can coordinate the strategy to be developed by the Council with the strategy of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with which the Council is familiar and which has been the subject of occasional reports to the Security Council.

Lastly, I wonder how we can support the strategy on the ground so as not to give the impression that we are speaking about two different things, that is to say, that there is a difference between the position of the Security Council and that of ECOWAS. It should be understood that we are acting on behalf and under the mandate of the Council, and in accordance with the Charter.

**The President**: Can I ask if Security Council members who did not speak this afternoon wish to do so now, or if anybody has any follow-up comments or questions before I attempt to sum up this afternoon's discussion? For the moment, there appear to be none, so I will now ask the two Foreign Ministers to take the floor.

**Mr. Fall** (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Once again, I would like to thank you, Madam President, as we have had a very fruitful day devoted to the issue of the Mano River region. I would like to express my strong conviction that we have dealt with very important matters regarding stability and security in the Mano

River region. We spoke at length about Sierra Leone this morning, and this afternoon we extended our discussion to the entire region. I would like to take up two or three matters that have been raised and that we feel are important.

The first is the question of refugees. We believe that the refugee issue cannot be separated from the question of stability in the subregion. Of course, there is a very large number of refugees in the subregion as well as outside it. It is therefore important that the Council continue to devote particular attention to this matter. Since we are talking about refugees, I would also like to mention the matter of repatriation and, in particular, to refer to the conditions for the reintegration of refugees into their regions of origin. Not only would that encourage the return of refugees to their countries, it would, above all, ensure that they would be properly settled and that they would not return to the host country. We have seen a great deal of coming and going between Liberia and Guinea and between Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Very often, when refugees return home they are very often struck from the records of organizations that looked after them. When they return to the host countries, the problem fails again to the host country. Speaking of host countries, I am very grateful to my brother who spoke earlier about the support to be given to host countries, and about the special consultations with respect to Guinea. This issue was raised several years ago, and I would like to revisit it. I am very happy that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is interested in this issue, for it is clear that countries that have agreed to host refugees on their territory and have borne the burden of hundreds of thousands of refugees also have the right to receive support from the international community to enable them to deal with the impact of those refugees on their territory.

The second point I wish to address is a new element, but a very important one. It is true that rebel attacks in the subregion have always been condemned both by the United Nations and by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). But a new element has appeared with regard to the atypical case of Liberia, one that ECOWAS itself has taken up. That element is the need for a dialogue to be organized within Liberia so that this country too can achieve national reconciliation and hold free elections next year. We believe that the timeline for those elections is very important. We said this over lunch, but I would like to return to it now. We do not think that peace can return to the Mano River basin unless the internal situation in Liberia is resolved. Whatever we can say around this table about finding a solution to Sierra Leone, about the fact that the Revolutionary United Front has become a political party, or about national reconciliation and all the other elements for consolidation having been fulfilled, the internal situation in Liberia continues to exist. I do not think General Diarra will disagree with me, as we discussed this at Durban, when I say that ECOWAS is intent on that dialogue taking place. That is why ECOWAS plans to organize a dialogue between the Government and the various movements. I hope the Council will support the efforts by of ECOWAS and the African Union: this is something that the Union also addressed at Durban.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the need to resume contacts among the three States. I believe initiatives are under way in that regard. What Morocco is doing in the region does not run counter to what ECOWAS is doing. It is a complementary effort. The Rabat meeting among the three heads of State was certainly the only such meeting possible at the time. I know that ECOWAS made a great effort to bring about reconciliation among the three States, but I do not think that at that time the conditions were right to bring the three heads of State to the table. I think that ECOWAS should welcome this Moroccan mediation. We should encourage it because the results of the Rabat meeting, and perhaps of a Rabat II, could then be taken up by ECOWAS so that we can speak the same language throughout our subregion.

In any case, I believe that talks are continuing; we are certain that in the coming weeks or months we may have a meeting of the three heads of State in order to continue what was begun at Rabat.

**The President**: I call on Mr. Koroma of Sierra Leone.

**Mr. Koroma** (Sierra Leone): My final intervention will focus on four basic areas. First, the United Nations intervention in Sierra Leone is clearly a success, but there are a few things that need to be done to ensure that that success can be sustainable. One of them is to ensure continued assistance for peace-building, bringing into focus some of the basic issues that need to be addressed quickly; the reintegration of ex-combatants, the recovery of the country and of its

institutions, and making sure that refugees in other countries return. That is the situation as far as Sierra Leone is concerned. But on Sierra Leone, the final issue is that any withdrawal by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) must be phased, with a build-up of the security apparatus to ensure that there is a continuum and sustainability.

My second point is that the Security Council has a lot of resources at its disposal: resources from the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, the United Nations Development Programme and the new United Nations Office for West Africa. All this could be brought to bear on the process initiated to ensure that the lessons learned in Sierra Leone are applied in a regional dimension. This could probably lead to a General Assembly resolution that would bring into sharp focus some of the activities that need to be carried out to ensure that we do not have to go from country to country to country to have a regional solution in the West African subregion. By that I mean that we need a comprehensive solution; the United Nations has a lot of resources at its disposal to achieve that comprehensive regional solution.

Thirdly, on Liberia, there could be a Lomé-type conference, similar to the conference that was held for Sierra Leone between the Government and the Revolutionary United Front. But that conference must be backed by support from the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union. An attempt to hold a conference between the Government and Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy within Liberia might not yield the desired results without the necessary backing from regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system.

Fourthly, a conference on Liberia would include provisions for a timetable that will tie in carefully with the 2003 elections in Liberia. This should be backed by strong United Nations and international support and presence, possibly with the involvement of United Nations observers or military observers from the international community.

**Mr. Ryan** (Ireland): So rich was the discussion this morning on the theme of lessons learned that it was not possible, as intended, to have a discussion and exchange of views. But there are a few moments remaining, and perhaps, although I touched on these points during our discussion at lunch, I might be permitted to register my points of concern on the theme of lessons learned in this more formal framework.

First, regarding the usefulness of Security Council missions on the ground in conflict regions generally: in recent years — including in Kosovo, East Timor, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, of course, Sierra Leone — they have played an important part in galvanizing adequate response by the United Nations system, including the Security Council and the international community, to such conflicts.

Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno covered the question of mandates. The case of Sierra Leone, like that of East Timor, demonstrates the key importance of strong and very clear mandates. We have learned from Sierra Leone that troop-contributing countri s must have the clearest picture of their mission in the interest of efficiency, transparency and accountability. Our healthily developing procedures in the Council for consultations with troop-contributing countries before mandates are adopted or renewed show that this key lesson is being learned, but I believe that we must continue to develop our thinking and good practice in this regard.

A third lesson certainly from Sierra Leone, and also, I believe, from East Timor, is that we must not be tempted, for budgetary reasons or for reasons of strain on capacity, to allow the components of relapse to reassemble themselves. I think that we now see more clearly from Sierra Leone, East Timor and other cases that transition from peacekeeping to peace-building and beyond is a continuum, as I think Sir Kieran was saying earlier, which includes capacity-building in the host State. Of course, that goes very far beyond the security and defence sectors alone.

**The President**: Are there any further comments? I will attempt to sum up the very rich discussion that we have had this afternoon.

I think that the first general point is that we are all agreed that we cannot look at the situation in Sierra Leone in isolation and that we need to address the instability that exists in the region as a whole.

Several key themes emerged. The first is the need to encourage regional efforts at reconciliation within Liberia and between Liberia and its neighbours. Absolutely critical to that is coordination between initiatives and that the Mano River Union, supported by ECOWAS, should continue its efforts to promote

greater security and confidence-building measures between the three countries.

The importance of the new United Nations Office for West Africa was recognized in terms of it being a focal point for United Nations support for regional efforts and indeed efforts within Liberia itself. I think that the strong feeling was that the physical presence of the United Nations on the ground was absolutely critical.

A third theme that emerged was the need to reinforce efforts to control the flow of small arms and to stop illegal exploitation of economic resources, which was also a theme that came out of this morning's discussion. It was recognized that sanctions have played a key role in bringing peace to Sierra Leone and that they must be applied, but, at the same time, that we need to reconcile possible differences that could open up between the Security Council and others on the future of sanctions, particularly in relation to Liberia.

It is important to strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS in terms of mediation and conflict prevention. There is a possible role for the European Union with respect to this.

The wider question arose on how it is best for the United Nations to mobilize resources for peace-building, as well as for peacekeeping. In that context, we had a discussion about development issues and how to create the right kind of environment to promote investment, which is very much the long-term strategy for the region.

There was a general view that despite the obvious difficulties, it is important for the international community to engage with Liberia. A policy of constructive engagement was discussed, as was the need to facilitate dialogue between the parties in Liberia and to look at other possibilities for dialogue. It is clear that we need some kind of comprehensive conflict-resolution strategy for Liberia. I think that that was agreed by everyone around the table.

I have three final points. One is the importance that we all attach to there being a sustained effort. We had two different analogies. We had our sprinkler/bucket system from our colleague from Singapore, and, from Sir Kieran, we had his antibiotic analogy. I am not sure which one I prefer. But I think we understand exactly what they both had in mind.

The issue of refugees was central to our discussion this morning, and has also come up this afternoon. In particular, it is not just a matter of looking at refugee flows, but looking at refugee flows at a very early stage as a possible indicator of problems in terms of different regions on the continent.

A final point, which I think is a very important point, is that the Security Council is good place to bring key players together — not just those within the Council but from the international financial institutions, other countries and other organizations, all of which have an important role to play, not just with respect to the Mano River Union, but in other areas of conflict throughout the world.

The United Kingdom delegation will produce a written summary of the conclusions of our discussions today based on the comments which have been made around the table, and these will then be made available for all of you.

All that remains is for me to thank all the participants very much indeed, in particular Ministers Fall and Koroma for being with us today, and to thank our speakers this morning and this afternoon and everyone around the table for your very active participation. I would also like to thank you for your very kind comments about the role that the United Kingdom has played in Sierra Leone and my own role in chairing this meeting today. I have to say that you all made it very easy indeed. It has been a very good meeting. I think there has been much food for thought and many good ideas, which really leave us with a kind of comprehensive action plan for a way forward which we can all take away.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.*